

A Quarterly Journal of
the National Alliance of
Preservation Commissions
Spring 2016



Alliance

the
review

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Preservation@50

FORUM 2016 | MOBILE, ALABAMA

- 4 A Great City for a Gathering
- 8 Historic Mobile: An Introduction
- 12 Africatown: An Important Place on Mobile's African American Heritage Trail
- 16 Take a Tour Through Selma
- 19 Happy Birthday National Historic Preservation Act
- 22 Alabama and The National Historic Preservation Act: A 50 Year Journey
- 26 A Preview of Our Featured Sessions
- 27 NAPC and US/ICOMOS Team Up
- 31 Preservation Advocacy vs Making Historic Districts Work
- 32 Preservation Spotlight
- 37 State News

COVER IMAGE CREDITS:

Restored Van
Antwerp building exterior
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Azalea bloom-out at
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A quarterly journal with news, technical assistance, and case studies relevant to local historic preservation commissions and their staff.

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on *The Alliance Review*, membership recruitment and retention, resources development, education programs and technical assistance are just a few of the possibilities. Join us today to make a difference in the future of preservation by contacting NAPC at 757-802-4141 or director@napcommissions.org.

In this Issue

BY MATTHEW HALITSKY, CHAIR, NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF PRESERVATION COMMISSIONS

Every other year, NAPC gathers preservation commissioners and staff for FORUM, where we can all learn from one another and from a host of experts. This July we return to our organization's roots in the South and to the home of the oldest Mardi Gras festival in the country, Mobile, Alabama. Not only a vibrant community with a rich history and a fantastic array of heritage assets, Mobile also exemplifies so many cities across the country today, facing the challenge of development pressures as a result of the Great Recession, keeping historic districts relevant, climate impact, and political winds. We look forward to continuing the national dialogue from previous FORUMs in such a remarkable community. This issue provides a small preview of the great things to see and hear at FORUM 2016.

We are also excited to partner with the National Park Service for the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act (Preservation@50). With the help of our local partners, including the Mobile Historic Development Commission, the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Alabama Historical Commission, we have organized an exceptional programming lineup comprised of educational sessions, workshops, tours and training courses revolving around the conference themes of Preservation@50, advocacy, diverse and underrepresented resources, climate impact, and local commissions. An impressive array of speakers including Frank Vagnone, author of the *Anarchist's Guide to Historic House Museums*, Ed McMahon, fellow with the Urban Land Institute, and Joe Minicozzi of Urban3 will reflect on the accomplishments of the preservation movement over the past fifty years, as well as look towards the future of preservation over the next fifty. Our national partners, including the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the U.S. National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, and of course the National Park Service will join us in Mobile to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of NPS.

We hope you will, as well. As the largest gathering of preservation commissions across the country, FORUM continues to provide not only essential training, but an open environment for the continued discussion of important preservation issues relevant to all of us.

Hip. Happening. Historic. See you in Mobile!

Take a walk down Dauphin Street in Downtown Mobile Credit: Tad Denson



Photo credit: Caitlin Crawford

One of the many historic homes in Mobile's Oakleigh Garden Historic District.

A Great City for a Gathering!

By NACP Staff

NACP is proud that Mobile, Alabama will be our host city for FORUM 2016. FORUM is the only national conference of its kind – specifically designed to address the concerns and educational needs of preservation commission members, staff, and surrounding communities. In planning FORUM 2016, NACP will feature the cultural heritage and traditions of our host city and surrounding region, so count on many opportunities to experience the culture unique to this geographic area.

Mobile, once called the Paris of the South, has a vibrant 300 year history, and is the cultural center of the Gulf Coast. During the summer, there are many ways to enjoy the city, including experiencing the growing culinary scene, enjoying the vibrant local nightlife, visiting one of the city's many museums, touring nearby historic neighborhoods lined with giant live oak trees, or taking a paddle in one of the most significant river delta systems in the country.

In addition to the warm welcome we will have from the folks in Mobile, the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation has decided to host their annual conference concurrently. We are pleased to announce that Stephanie Toothman, Associate Director of Cultural Resources at the National Park Service, will be their keynote speaker. The National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers will also hold their quarterly meeting in conjunction with FORUM. These partner meetings will give our attendees the opportunity to interact with NPS leadership and SHPOs from across the country.

NAPC chose Mobile as its host city for FORUM 2016 in part because of its strong and long-standing local preservation program. As with communities across the US, Mobile lost many of its historic buildings in the 1960s and 1970s. The city recognized that this loss had serious repercussions for the community, and thus created the Mobile Historic Development Commission (MHDC) to protect and enhance historic resources. Since its founding in 1962, MHDC has sixteen historic districts listed on National Register and seven of those are locally designated. The MHDC mandate goes well beyond the recognition of historic buildings. Today, the staff handles requests for information, researches buildings, conducts seminars, offers tours, assists with tax credit projects and provides technical expertise. They have also been

integral in the process of planning FORUM 2016. The part-time volunteer staff that began the work of MHDC has grown to a department that performs work ensuring the continuation and preservation of Mobile's heritage.

We will have an array of pre-conference tours and events, including our Commission Short Course, State CLG Coordinators Meeting, and a special Climate Change Symposium presented by US/ICOMOS (described in more detail later in this issue). The Sustainability Luncheon will feature local favorite and ULI Fellow Ed McMahon, who will focus on the importance of preservation as a tool for sustainability. Tours have been designed to feature the diverse resources and historical events that comprise the history of the region. As a waterfront city, no visit to Mobile would be complete without a tour of the harbor narrated by local historian John Sledge. In recognition of the challenges facing historic house museums, a dynamic workshop will be presented by Frank Vagnone, author of the *Anarchist's Guide to House Museums*. A special all-day tour to Selma (also further detailed in this issue) will expose attendees to the location of significant moments in the Civil Rights Movement, culminating in a visit to the historic Edmund Pettus Bridge. And for those who are interested in a more leisurely visit, we have organized a tour of the Gulf Coast, featuring a stop at Fort Morgan.

Educational sessions at FORUM 2016 will generally focus on one or more of the following themes, which represent the wide variety of preservation challenges we all face in our communities:

- Preservation@50
- Advocacy
- Diverse and underrepresented resources
- Climate change
- Commission potpourri

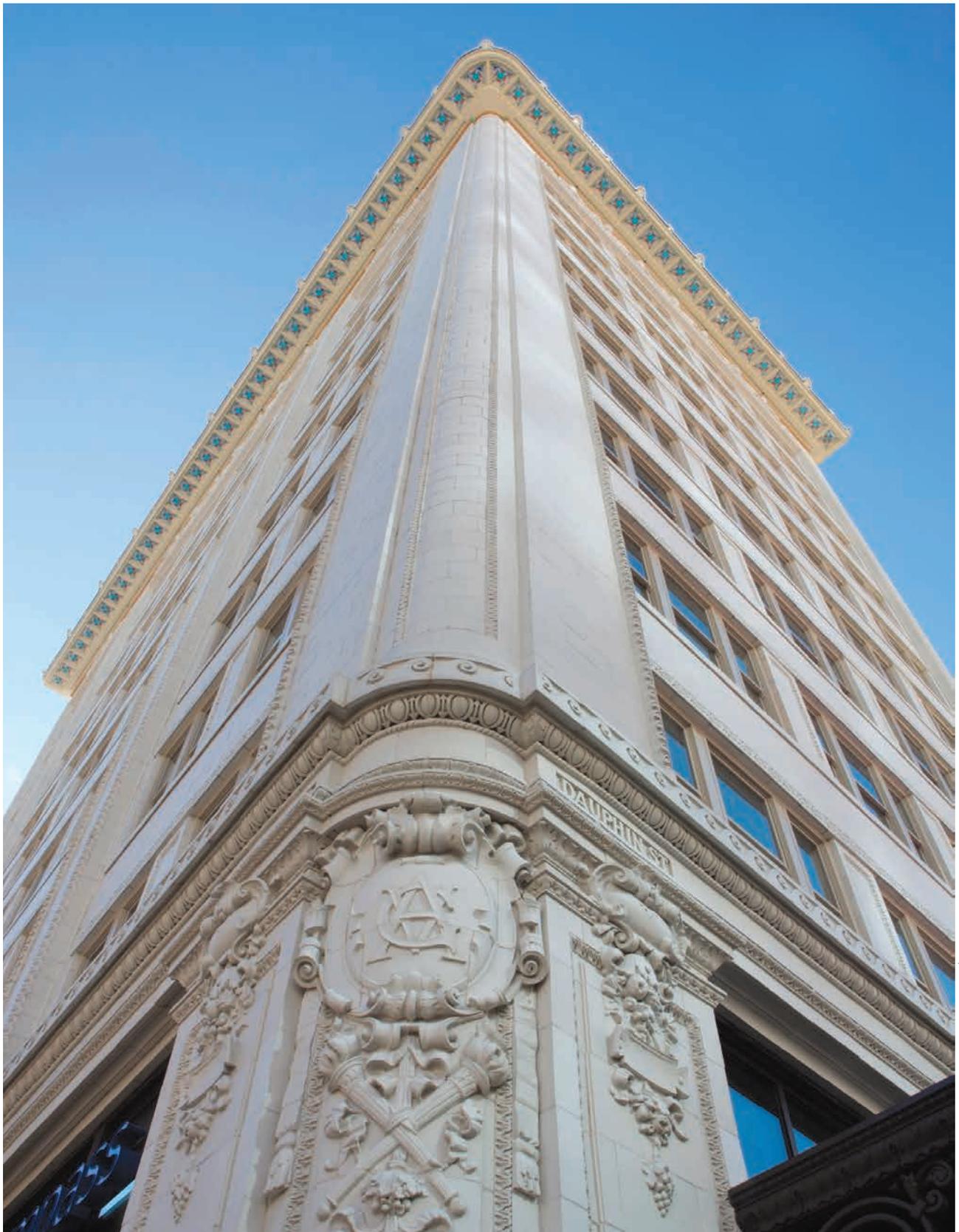


Photo courtesy of Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood/Mason Fischer

Restored Van Antwerp building, downtown Mobile

The primary location for FORUM 2016 sessions will be at the Battle House Renaissance Mobile hotel, a 1908 building designed by Frank

Andrews of New York, and situated in the heart of the downtown Mobile historic district. In 1974, the hotel closed and became a symbol of the

vanished glory of Mobile's historic district. The building remained shuttered for 25 years. It was with great excitement that the Retirement System of Alabama embarked on a \$132 million dollar investment in downtown Mobile in 2001; this work included the rehabilitation of the Battle House. The renovation was complete and the building opened again in 2009. That same year it was named one of the top 500 hotels in the world by Travel + Leisure magazine. In 2010, the property became a Historic Hotel of America property as designated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.



Battle House Renaissance Mobile Hotel Lobby

of the preservation movement over the past fifty years, and Joe Minicozzi of Urban3 will use the session themes to summarize our accomplishments at FORUM and issue our call to action for the next 50 years. At NAPC, we will use this information to develop our work program and prioritize our efforts to serve you, our constituents.

As you can see, with the help of our local hosts, we've developed an educational and fun-filled conference with a little bit of something for everyone.

There will be a special emphasis on the opening and closing plenary programs in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, and in an effort to help frame the future work of local commissions. Frank Vagnone, our opening plenary speaker, will pause and reflect on the development and accomplishments

Conference information will continually be updated on our conference website at <https://napcommissions.org/forum/>, so please check in regularly for all of the latest news. You can also like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter for up to date information. This year's event will be an exciting mix of the old FORUM format with some fresh new sessions and events. We look forward to seeing you in Mobile! ■

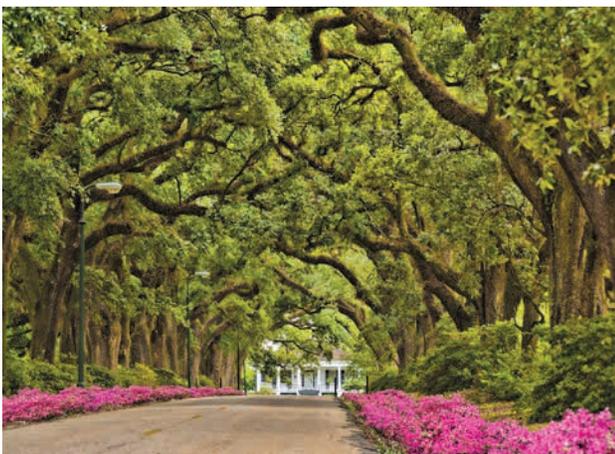


Photo credit: Tad Denson

The Avenue of the Oaks on the campus of Spring Hill College



Photo credit: L. Craig Roberts

Government Street United Methodist Church

John S. Sledge is an architectural historian for the Mobile Historic Development Commission and author of five books on local history and architecture. His latest book is The Mobile River (University of South Carolina Press).

Historic Mobile: An Introduction

By John S. Sledge

“Mobile stays in the heart, loveliest of cities.” So wrote Carl Carmer, an Ivy League English professor come south to teach during the 1930s. While in the Heart of Dixie, he took the opportunity to travel around the state, and wrote a memorable and evocative book about it—*Stars Fell on Alabama*. Like many a tourist before and after him, Carmer discovered Alabama’s only seaport to be a place apart, semi-tropical and exotic, graced with rich historical and architectural legacies. Indeed, one antebellum traveler declared the city the most distinctive he had seen, a sentiment echoed by London Times reporter William Howard Russell in 1861; Pres. Woodrow Wilson in 1913; John Dos Passos in 1943; and Henry Miller two years after that.

So what is it that makes this city’s built environment so special? After all, many other towns have monumental Greek Revival churches, elegant Italianate houses, polychromatic Queen Anne mansions, and cozy bungalows. Granted, these are all national styles, but when encountered on a Mobile street overarched by live oak trees, flanked by azalea bushes, and lined with cast-iron lampposts, they seem somehow sprung uniquely from this sandy soil, to be lovingly caressed by just these salty breezes. And then there are the Creole and Gulf Coast cottages, vernacular expressions that trace their pedigree back to the Caribbean and then to Normandy. Often effortlessly blended with formal architectural expressions, such as

Greek Revival, these lovely cottages are defined by their strong side-gabled profiles and full recessed (and sometimes wraparound) porches—or galleries, as the French colonists termed them. Mobile’s porches are some of the South’s most inviting, in fact, and play no small role in imparting a small-town charm to a city that is actually much larger than many unsuspecting observers might guess.

Mobile was founded by a hardy band of French Canadians in 1702 as part of a master plan to hem in the English on the Eastern Seaboard. The backcountry’s extensive river system provided ideal access to Indian tribes for alliances and trade.



Photo courtesy of Mobile Historic Development Commission

Van Antwerp Building, Mobile's first skyscraper

Originally situated almost thirty miles north of Mobile Bay on the Mobile River, the city was moved to its present location in 1711 because of persistent floods, yellow fever, and shifting settlement patterns among the Indians. During the eighteenth century, Mobile changed hands several times as the European powers struggled for dominance on the North American continent. The

British took possession in 1763 as a result of their victory in the French and Indian War; the Spanish, allied with the Americans during the Revolutionary War, besieged and captured the city in 1780, holding it until 1813 when the United States at last gained the territory during the War of 1812. There followed a period of brash Yankee growth and Mobile became an important seaport, third

busiest in the nation by 1860, but the Civil War dashed its prosperity and led to decades of stagnation and poverty. Farragut's victory at the Battle of Mobile Bay is justifiably famous for his immortal command, "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!", but it had significant practical impacts as well, including sealing off the bay to blockade runners and helping to secure Lincoln's 1864 re-election.

The postwar years were difficult, but the city gradually recovered, and focused on harbor improvements and developing the port. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the city's sandy streets blossomed with a stunning medley of high Victorian-style mansions, and then as the decades progressed, less ostentatious revival styles. The working classes and poor made do in more affordable "side-hall" cottages and shotgun houses, sometimes dressed up in the latest ornamental appliques like brackets or knee braces in an attempt to appear au courant.

Though founded more than three hundred years ago, Mobile, alas, can no longer boast any of its earliest architecture, or, for that matter, too many landmark structures from all the subsequent decades. These buildings—the original protective fort, a wooden Catholic church, timber and mud dwellings with palmetto-frond roofs, and a long list of jaw-dropping houses and churches and stores—are vanished, done in either by the hot, wet climate or such vagaries as storm, fire, war, and neglect.

It's hard to say for sure when Mobilians began to realize just how important the buildings crowding so familiarly all around them might be. No one appears to have batted an eye, for example, when the bricks of old Fort Conde were pulled down by energetic Americans during the 1820s and used for fill along the Mobile River's marshy banks. By their lights, the fort was an antiquated pile, no longer necessary for defense in the brash young Republic, and besides it was in the way. Room needed to be made for streets, offices, houses, stores, taverns, and, critical to antebellum

wheeling and dealing, coffeehouses. Opinion had turned a bit by 1895, however, when the Old Guard House (erected in 1839) with its distinctive clock tower was torn down to build the (now lost too) German Relief Hall. A writer for the *Mobile Commercial Register* described the demolition in somewhat wistful terms. "The antique-looking building," he wrote, "formerly occupied by the police authorities and behind the massive walls of which so many have pined in durance vile, is no more."

The 1930s, '40s, and '50s saw a flowering of local colorists, people such as Marian Acker MacPherson, William and Annie Shillito Howard, Genevieve Southerland, S. Blake McNeely, and Caldwell Delaney, whose etchings, paintings, photographs, poetry, and prose alluringly conjured the city's romantic past, especially as manifested in its architecture. Moss-hung trees foregrounding gently decaying brick townhouses; ornate, rusting cast-iron gates; columned mansions reduced to surplus stores or vacancy; and colorful contextual figures, sporting fishing poles or laundry bundles were their stock in trade. These buildings, they were saying through their creative works, mostly overlooked amid the urban hurly-burly, were the past made tangible, and worthy of preservation. Short on scholarship and culturally insensitive as much of this material was, it nonetheless paved the way for successful historic-home tours and heritage organizations such as the Historic Mobile Preservation Society (which administers the 1833 Oakleigh mansion as a house museum), Friends of Magnolia Cemetery, and the Mobile Historic Development Commission (founded 1962) which have done so much to raise awareness and fight for what remains of historic Mobile.

Too often, we preservationists and not a few longtime inhabitants decry what has already been lost in Mobile: the remarkable rows of multi-story riverfront saloons and warehouses, the Southern Hotel (much of its brick and ironwork used to build the Bellingrath home during the 1930s), the delightful Gothic-style St. John's Episcopal Church, Bloodgood Row, and whole neighborhoods of

shotgun houses and side-hall cottages leveled during Urban Renewal. Indeed, out of a total of 200 local structures surveyed by the Historic American Buildings Survey during the 1930s, over 140 have disappeared, one of the highest HABS attrition rates in the United States. But as even a cursory walk downtown or through any neighborhood east of the beltline will demonstrate, much else remains as a feast for the eye and the imagination. There is, for example, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (constructed 1834-95) with its soaring, gilded towers and barrel-vaulted interior; Christ Episcopal Church (1838) with its highly formal Greek Revival façade and priceless Tiffany windows; the Hall-Ford House (1828) with its masterful mix of Creole and classical elements;

Georgia Cottage (1845) with its famous literary associations and long oak alley; the Marshall-Dixon House (1850) with its intact antebellum garden; the Richards-DAR House with its florid cast iron verandah; and the Kilduff House (1891) with its flat-sawn balustrade shaded by spreading palmettos.

Thankfully, Mobile's historic architecture is now well-protected by layers of national, state and local regulations, including an effective volunteer architectural review board that has been at it for over four decades. So, whether you are from Albuquerque, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Chicago, Dubuque, Oshkosh, or Seattle, you are sure to find much here to delight and instruct. Enjoy! ■

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- **Indiana Statewide Conference, Vincennes, IN, April 28**
- **Louisiana Trust Preservation Conference, May 12**
- **Cincinnati, OH, May 20 & 21**
- **Main Street Now Conference, Short Course, Milwaukee, WI, May 22**
- **Brookings, SD, August 11 & 12**



Africatown: An Important Place on Mobile's African American Heritage Trail

The story of Africatown begins in 1859 when Timothy Meaher, a wealthy local businessman, chartered the *Clotilda* to sail to West Africa and pick up a cargo of slaves to be transported back to the United States. Congress had banned the importation of Africans for slavery in 1808, but Meaher felt confident that he could accomplish the enterprise and win a bet in the process. After hiring Captain William Foster, Meaher had the ship, a very fast schooner, outfitted for the voyage to the kingdom of Dahomey on the west coast of Africa. Meaher's brothers James and Burns and his friends Thomas Buford and John M. Dabney also knew about the venture.

After a voyage of several months that not only involved bad weather but also having to outrun several squadrons of naval ships tasked with intercepting suspected slave traders, Captain Foster was able to purchase over 100 Africans to make the Middle Passage.

By the time he arrived at Mobile in July 1860, the authorities had heard of the venture and had begun to actively search for the *Clotilda*. The Meahers with Dabney's help were successful in alluding the authorities, and so about 110 people,

approximately half of whom were children, found themselves enslaved on a foreign shore. The outbreak of the Civil War was less than a year away.

The Africans were divided up or sold at Burns Meaher's plantation in southern Clarke County, just upriver from Mobile. While a group of 76 to 80 people were enslaved in the Mobile vicinity, other *Clotilda* survivors were sold off as individuals or in small groups of two or three to owners who lived upriver. The large group of Africans remaining together in the Mobile area were able to retain their

culture, language, and folkways more easily than those sold in small groups to various owners. The Mobile Africans remained enslaved until the end of the Civil War when along with millions of other slaves, they were freed. Unable to return to their homelands, they first rented and eventually purchased land from the Meahers and others to start their own community. Africatown was founded in 1866, according to Cudjo Lewis, the longest-lived survivor of the Clotilda. The new town was recognized as a distinct place by the larger community as early as 1870.

The first Africans to purchase their land were the former slaves of Thomas Buford, who had died in 1866. Several whites purchased part of his land. In 1870, Jaba and Polly Shade and Charlie and Maggie Lewis in conjunction with several African Americans bought seven acres they had been living on from the whites. Known as Lewis

Quarters, this community lay only two miles west of Africatown.

The founders of Africatown self-segregated themselves from the larger white community and limited their contact with other former slaves that had already been in America for generations. The group maintained as much of their African identity as possible by using their own language among themselves, maintaining customs, buying land collectively, electing their own judges and choosing for their leader someone who had been a member of Dahomean royalty, known as Gumpa. Gumpa, also called Peter Lee, was born in the early 19th century and was descended from Kings Agaja, Glele, and Guezo and was a contemporary of King Benhazin.

These historical figures are the most infamous African kings involved in selling captives to



Photo courtesy of the Alabama Historical Commission

Historic bungalow in Africatown



Photo courtesy of the Alabama Historical Commission

Africatown Historic District, Mobile

European traders. The royal house of Dahomey profited greatly from the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The palace complexes, which have become UNESCO World Heritage Sites, are found at Abomey in the Republic of Benin, West Africa. However, Gumpa spent most of his life south of Abomey at the coastal trading center at Ouidah, living at the Dahomean administrative complex. This complex is located near the Catholic Basilica and Temple of the Python. On a daily basis, Gumpa managed the trade of captives and represented the Dahomean royal line in such exchanges. In 1859, Gumpa fell out of favor with his family in Abomey.

Due to a prohibition of spilling royal blood, Gumpa was traded into the Middle Passage aboard the *Clotilda*. Today, a family house still stands in Ouidah that relates to the royal line associated with Gumpa, likewise a chimney stands at a high

point above Africatown that local oral history suggests is a feature of the house Gumpa built for himself and his newly-constituted family. The community did adopt single family housing, a concession to Western standards based mainly on the lack of land. By 1872 the community had built their own church known as Old Landmark Church. A graveyard was established by 1876 on land donated by the church. This cemetery, known as Plateau or Old Plateau Cemetery, is important as it is the final resting place of at least some of the *Clotilda* survivors. A map of Mobile that identifies the location of the "African Colony" at Magazine Point was drawn in 1889 by Paul Boudousquie, but it offers no details of its development. By the turn of the century, Africatown was fully developed with its own churches, schools and a few businesses.

City directories, beginning in 1948 when the area was annexed to the City of Mobile, reveal a mostly

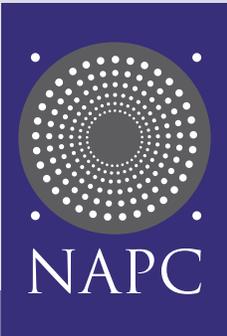
working class, African-American neighborhood. However, information is not available after 1951, as the directories stopped identifying race after that date. Occupations typically found in the area include: carpenter, laborer, and grocer.

Several mills existed along the Mobile River that were within walking distance. Also, there is evidence that a spur of Mobile's street car line passed through the area at the turn of the century. Most of the early 20th century houses in the district are modest houses built for working class families and stylistically reflect the Bungalow/Craftsman traditions.

In increasing numbers after World War II, homes were built in many variations depending upon geographic region. Bungalows in Africatown most frequently exhibit combinations of the Craftsman and Mission styles and are often very modest in size due in large part to socio-economic conditions faced by African Americans during this period. While the bungalow

continued to remain popular until 1940, Minimal Traditional houses began to appear in the years just prior to World War II and remained popular well past the war. Early Ranch homes were built in the late 1950s, and they continue to be popular today. These often replaced older houses in the neighborhood. However, they are no less important as they demonstrate the continued viability of the district. It is notable that city directories reveal a high proportion of home ownership as opposed to rental, in Africatown.

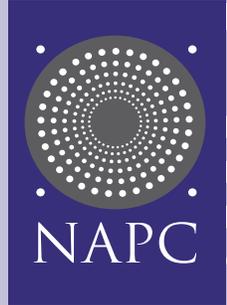
Listed on National Register of Historic Places in 2012, this district remains a distinctive community and efforts are underway to develop a neighborhood revitalization plan to achieve an environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable neighborhood. Africatown is also a popular attraction on Mobile's Dora Franklin Finley African American Heritage Trail. ■



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Mary Mason Shell is preservation planner for the Alabama SHPO and manages the Certified Local Government program. She serves on the boards of Your Town Alabama, Alabama Communities of Excellence and State Scenic Byways Council. She studied history and community planning at Auburn University and historic preservation at Middle Tennessee State University. She enjoys exploring and connecting Alabama's abundant cultural and natural resources.

Take a Tour Through Selma

By Mary Mason Shell

During FORUM 2016, there will be an opportunity to enjoy a trip from Mobile through Alabama's Coastal Plain and "Blackbelt" regions to reach historic Selma and leave your footprints on the landmark Edmund Pettus Bridge! The Blackbelt is prominent for its physical and cultural geography, and was a center of activity for the civil rights movement in the 1960s. On the bus trip, tour guides with expertise in the historic, cultural and natural features of the region, will share their knowledge and perspectives. We will also view documentaries on the Civil Rights movement and Blackbelt culture, from the National Park Service Lowndes County Interpretive Center and Alabama Public Television. We will enter Selma from Highway 80 along the Selma-Montgomery March route, defined by its historic narrow shoulder. The two-lane road used by the marchers has now become a divided highway of four lanes, designated as a National Historic Trail with an agreement document protecting its historic integrity.

Downtown Selma and the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the key location in the Bloody Sunday events of March 7, 1965. Photo credit: David Schneider





Photo credit: David Schneider

The Reformed Presbyterian Church is one of the African-American churches where group meetings were held during the civil rights movement.

In the City of Selma, the group will enjoy local tour guide and founding Alabama Black Heritage Council member Loretta Wimberly's interpretation of the historic African American community, where Voting and Civil Rights activities were nourished at churches, schools and homes. Mrs. Wimberly will relate stories on the meetings and events leading up to Turnaround Tuesday, Bloody Sunday and the successful Selma to Montgomery March on March 21, 1965. The Dallas County courthouse where local citizens were denied voting rights and the county jail where Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders were jailed for civil disobedience will be on the tour.

More than ten churches have been documented on the National or State Register for their association with the Selma Voting Rights and Civil Rights Movements and many for their architectural features as well. You will see a beautiful example of the Romanesque Revival style from 1908, the National Historic

Landmark Brown Chapel, the starting point of the Selma-Montgomery March and host location of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. First Baptist Church, a handsome 1894 Gothic Revival structure, hosted the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Tabernacle Baptist Church, location of Selma's first mass meeting for voter's rights on May 14, 1963, is a two-story Classical Revival brick building designed by African American architect David T. West.

Selma University was founded in 1878 as the Alabama Baptist Normal and Theological School to train African Americans as ministers and teachers. It was one of many institutions in the Alabama Blackbelt providing educational opportunities to a local African-American professional class supporting leadership and a setting for the developing Voter's Rights movement.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TOUR

The **Jackson House** is a 1906 structure with c. 1960 modifications, furnished as it was in the 1960s when Martin Luther King, Jr. was a frequent and welcomed guest. Built as a wedding present from Dr. Richard Hudson for his daughter, the dwelling has long been associated with middle-class black professionals in the city. Dr. Sullivan Jackson and his wife, Richie Jean Sherrod Jackson, moved into the house in the late 1950s. It became a safe haven for Dr. King, what his biographer called a “domestic refuge, where he knew he would find the small guest bedroom stocked for him...”

The **home of Samuel and Amelia Boynton**, who are remembered in the community for helping people register to vote and obtain property rights. Mrs. Boynton was a survivor of a physical attack and tear gas violence on Bloody Sunday. The Boynton House is highly significant and the family is seeking funding to stabilize and preserve the structure.

Sturdivant Hall is an 1856 Greek Revival house, two stories in height, and constructed of

brick but stuccoed in a pattern to give the appearance of ashlar stone. The front facade features a monumentally-scaled portico utilizing 30-foot-tall Corinthian columns. Purchased by the City of Selma in 1957, the mansion was turned into a house museum after the purchase and named in honor of a major contributor, Robert Daniel Sturdivant.

The **National Park Service Interpretive Center** and City Welcome Center are adjacent to the Edmund Pettus Bridge. City and state leaders including Selma Mayor George Evans and Congresswoman Terry Sewell will welcome our group there. Members of Selma’s local historic preservation commission and the state Black Heritage Council will join us on the Edmund Pettus Bridge and can share their experiences and knowledge associated with the Selma-Montgomery March and other events leading up to passage of the 1965 Civil Rights Act.

Following the tour, a box lunch will be served on board the bus for the trip back to Mobile. The return route will offer views of Alabama’s picturesque Blackbelt countryside. ■



Photo credit: David Schneider

The Sullivan Jackson House was used as a strategy center for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and frequent guests were Martin Luther King, Jr., Rev. Ralph Abernathy and Rev. Andrew Young. Here they negotiated with the US Justice Department about the events surrounding Bloody Sunday and the 1965 March to Montgomery.

Ron Anzalone is Director of the Office of Preservation Initiatives, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. His office administers Preserve America and works on policy analysis, including the economic, social, and environmental benefits of preservation. Ron is the ACHP staff lead for the 50th anniversary of NHPA. After hours, he chairs a municipal historical commission in northern Virginia.

Happy Birthday NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT!

By Ron Anzalone

Within the past few generations, historic preservation has evolved from a limited and somewhat insular pursuit of preserving Monticello, Mesa Verde, or Colonial Williamsburg (certainly worthy goals in their own right) into a broad-based popular movement. Those of us working in the field regularly debate the breadth and depth of public preservation support, given suburban blandness, urban and rural blight, and deteriorating infrastructure. But the fact that there are thousands of cities, towns, and counties with established historic districts, and that these places teem with enthusiastic volunteers, vibrant local government programs, and successful Main Street entrepreneurs, gives us hope.

Beyond the cliché of local activists fighting off revving bulldozers, the goals of preservation activity have varied over the years. While it remains a truism that preservation is local, a true centerpiece and catalyst of those efforts is the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which turns 50 this year. The law was passed by Congress in the mid-1960s at a time that saw widespread destruction of older buildings, neighborhoods, and other important cultural sites across the country through urban renewal, highway construction, and other public improvements. The “NHPA” signaled America’s commitment to preserving its heritage in spite of those trends. In the process, its key components helped point the way to a new covenant for preservation in America.

The earliest federal preservation law was the Antiquities Act of 1906, which authorized the protection of antiquities on public lands along with presidential designation of national monuments. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 declared a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance, and authorized the Interior Department to conduct several related programs. It was the foundation for today’s National Historic Landmark program as well as the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) and Historic American Engineering Record (HAER).

Congressional charter of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949 provided official

legitimacy for broad private preservation efforts. But although this and the preceding statutes were significant, they did not create a national rallying point for preservation or provide a means to integrate preservation into federal agency programs or planning.

In 1964, a blue-ribbon committee under the auspices of the United States Conference of Mayors, in cooperation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and several federal agencies, began a study of historic preservation needs in the United States. The resulting 1966 report, *With Heritage So Rich*, revealed a growing public interest in preservation and the need for a unified approach to the protection of historic resources. This report influenced Congress to enact a strong new statute establishing a nationwide preservation policy — the NHPA.

The report called for a “new preservation” integrated with rather than isolated from contemporary life, and went on to say that “*if the preservation movement is to be successful...it must go beyond saving occasional historic houses and opening museums. It must be more than a cult of antiquarians. It must do more than revere a few precious national shrines. It must attempt to give a sense of orientation to our society, using structures and objects of the past to establish values of time and place.... This new preservation must look beyond the individual building and individual landmark and concern itself with the historic and architecturally valued areas and districts which contain a special meaning for the community.... In sum, if we wish to have a future with greater meaning, we must concern ourselves not only with the historic highlights, but we must be concerned with the total heritage of the nation and all that is worth preserving from our past as a living part of the present.*”¹

With passage of the law, Congress made the federal government a full partner and a leader in historic preservation. While it was recognized that national goals for historic preservation could

best be achieved by supporting local citizen and community work, it was also understood that the federal government must set an example through enlightened policies and practices. Basic foundational elements were also needed. In the words of the law, the federal government’s role would be to “provide leadership” for preservation, “contribute to” and “give maximum encouragement” to preservation, and “foster conditions under which our modern society and our prehistoric and historic resources can exist in productive harmony.” Indeed, an underlying motivation in passage of the Act was to transform the federal government of the post-war era from an agent of indifference, frequently responsible for needless loss of historic resources, to a facilitator, an agent of thoughtful change, and a responsible steward for future generations. Two policy statements contained in the original NHPA in 1966 are particularly telling—the Congress “finds and declares” that “the spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage,” and “the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people”

To achieve this transformation, NHPA expanded the list of buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects worthy of preservation consideration first recognized for their national significance to a more complete National Register of Historic Places, which now could include places of state and local importance. The law then created a partnership among the federal government and the states that would capitalize on the strengths of each.

- The federal government, led by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior as the agency most experienced in studying, managing, and using the nation’s historic and cultural heritage, would provide funding assistance, basic technical knowledge and tools, and a broad national perspective on America’s heritage.

- The states, through State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) appointed by the Governor of each state, would provide matching funds, a designated state office, and a statewide preservation program tailored to State and local needs and designed to support and promote State and local historic preservation interests and priorities.

The drafters of NHPA, however, also appreciated that transforming the role of the federal government would require more. A new ethic was needed throughout all levels and agencies of the executive branch. To that end:

- An Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the first and only federal entity created solely to address historic preservation issues, was established as a cabinet-level body of Presidentially-appointed citizens, experts in the field, and federal, state, and local government representatives, to ensure that private citizens, local communities, and other concerned parties would have a forum for influencing federal policy, programs, and decisions as they impacted historic properties and their attendant values.
- Section 106 of NHPA granted legal status to historic preservation in federal planning, decision-making, and project execution. Section 106 requires all federal agencies to “take into account” the effects of their actions on historic properties, and provide ACHP with a reasonable opportunity to comment on those actions and the manner in which Federal agencies are taking historic properties into account in their decisions.

As with any successful partnership, collaboration and division of labor have remained essential ingredients. Over the years through a number of changes to the law, Congress has reaffirmed the core principles of this partnership. The role of each partner has evolved to reflect the growing sophistication of the program, but emphasis has remained on different, yet mutually supportive, responsibilities. Multiple amendments to the law have further clarified the role of local governments, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations in these efforts, expanded consideration of properties for the National Register, and more clearly identified federal agency preservation program responsibilities.

The NHPA will officially turn 50 on October 15, 2016, the anniversary of the law’s signature by President Lyndon Johnson. As we blow out the candles on that birthday cake, we are struggling with many issues—diversity and inclusiveness, tax reform, sustainability, climate adaptation and resilience, the limits of public investment, and more. We will need to decide—what are our wishes for the future of preservation? How can we go beyond the current programs in practical ways that will not only meet current challenges but anticipate new ones? And what actions do we need to take to help our wishes come true? ■

This article reflects the views of the author but not necessarily the ACHP or federal government.

¹*With Heritage So Rich*, Special Committee on Historic Preservation, U.S. Conference of Mayors, reprinted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Books, Washington, D.C., 1999, pp. 193-194 (orig. pub. Random House, New York, 1966, pp. 207-208).

²National Historic Preservation Act, Section 1, Public Law 89-665 as amended by Public Law 96-515.

Mary Mason Shell is preservation planner for the Alabama SHPO and manages the Certified Local Government program. She serves on the boards of Your Town Alabama, Alabama Communities of Excellence and State Scenic Byways Council. She studied history and community planning at Auburn University and historic preservation at Middle Tennessee State University. She enjoys exploring and connecting Alabama's abundant cultural and natural resources.

Alabama and the National Historic Preservation Act: A 50 Year Journey

By Mary Mason Shell

“Preservationists are the only people in the world who are invariably confirmed in their wisdom after the fact....” - John Kenneth Galbraith, presentation to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1979

The story of the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) began before it was formally established. Most members of the general public and even many in Alabama's preservation community may be unaware of the important role that Alabama leaders played in establishing national historic preservation legislation. These early efforts were key to developing and maintaining Alabama's current stewardship of the state's varied and numerous historic and cultural resources. Alabama's current historic preservation environment owes much of its infrastructure to passage of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, yet few realize how much influence a native of Sand Mountain, in Dekalb County, had on this critical legislation. Albert M. Rains served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1945 to 1965. National programs bearing his legislative imprint include affordable and elderly housing, urban renewal and redevelopment, and rural housing programs. He wrote the nation's first mass transit bill and was instrumental in legislation leading to

the creation of the Interstate Highway System. He was an ardent supporter of the Tennessee Valley Authority and supported legislation that provided for the full development of the Coosa-Alabama River System. His work also led to the establishment of Alabama's first national military park at Horseshoe Bend in Tallapoosa County.

Congressman Rains' contribution to national historic preservation policy occurred after his retirement from the U.S. House of Representatives. NPS Director, George Hartzog, Jr recalled, "In 1964, Rep. Albert M. Rains, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Housing, indicated to Laurance G. Henderson (Director of the Senate Committee on Small Business) that he would be interested in pursuing a project of public interest after retirement. Henderson and Carl Feiss, a trustee of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, decided that the former congressman should lead a special committee that would examine preservation activities in Europe and prepare a report detailing the



Photo courtesy of Alabama Historical Commission

US Congressman Albert Rains presents an American Flag to Postmistress Genie Lister in Rainsville on August 30, 1964.

need for preservation in the United States.” Working with this committee provided an opportunity to reverse the destructive impact of urban renewal and highway projects on our nation’s historic properties.

Rains’ committee saw the impact of urban renewal programs on places of national heritage in the core of cities. Highways were busting right through cities, destroying neighborhoods, downtowns, archaeological sites, and historic places. The Ford Foundation provided funds for the Governors Association, the League of Cities, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors to participate on the committee. These groups were very potent political organizations and the League of Cities membership included prominent preserva-

tionists. Committee members went to Europe to discuss restoration and to discover and evaluate what had happened on that continent after the devastation of World War II. Several weeks after returning from Europe, the Rains Committee met in New York City and approved recommendations for drafting a new national historic preservation program in the United States.

Rains filed a report with the Ford Foundation which turned into a best-selling book entitled *With Heritage So Rich*. As a result of this far-reaching and extensive study, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was enacted by the United States Congress. Correspondence shows that former Congressman Rains was building state support for the national legislation in the spring of

1966, when he responded to a letter from Mrs. Axford of the Women's Club of Gadsden. Rains described the national legislation introduced and suggests that she encourage state legislators to read the bill. His pride in these efforts was apparent when he delivered the address "Preservation — A National Phenomenon" in 1968, at the first annual meeting of the Alabama Historical Commission, the state partner in the National Historic Preservation Act.

Rep. Robert Edington of Mobile led Alabama's efforts to develop policy and legislation to protect our heritage. During his eight years of service in the Alabama House of Representatives and four years as a senator from Mobile County, Edington aided in the legislation establishing the Alabama Historical Commission, the USS Alabama Battleship Commission, and various local historic districts in Mobile. For his legislative efforts, Edington received a national award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C. Many Alabamians remember participating in a unique fundraising technique to restore the USS Alabama, which involved donations from Alabama schoolchildren.

In June 1966, around the same time the National Preservation Act was being introduced, Edington introduced State Act 168 creating the Alabama Historical Commission. Correspondence shows he shared the draft of the bill with universities, county and local historical societies, and other state governments for input and support. Comments received from Connecticut, Georgia, Massachusetts, and North Carolina were generally supportive but suggested that the annual budget be much higher than the \$25,000 request. The bill was passed on August 19, 1966.

With leadership from Milo B. Howard, director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, the new AHC was organized and priorities developed. In a letter to Governor Lurleen Wallace on March 24, 1967, Milo Howard reports at the organizational meeting of the AHC that the following officers were adopted: Chair,



Photo courtesy of Alabama Historical Commission

Montgomery native Milo Barrett Howard Jr. (1933-1981) headed the Alabama Department of Archives and History and served as Alabama's first State Historic Preservation Officer.

Milo Howard; Vice-chair, John M. Ward; Secretary, Mrs. Sidney Van Antwerp; and Treasurer, Dr. Ralph B. Draughon. They set an April 30 deadline to receive applications for executive director. Warner Floyd was hired as the first director, and served from September 1, 1967 until August 22, 1978.

Agendas for early organizational meetings include discussion of the National Historic Preservation Act and the role of the AHC. Milo Howard served as the State Historic Preservation Officer, the link to the National Preservation Act, in these early years of the program. The expression "the more things change the more they stay the same" comes to mind, in reading correspondence in these formative years of the Alabama agency. A letter to Mrs. Norwood in Birmingham from Floyd thanks her for her interest in a historic house near Clio. He goes on to say the state does not have funds to renovate the house but encourages her to provide information to list it on the National Register. A hand written note on the copy of the letter states, "can be used for similar letters," indicating the frequency Floyd heard from property owners and citizens concerned about an important piece of their local history. This

connection with local historic preservation interests remains a big part of AHC's overall mission. Staff at the AHC continues to hear from concerned citizens looking to save historic resources and provide them with helpful and accurate information.

Warner Floyd is the author of early National Register nominations and deserves credit for his ambitious approach. In an early report on the future development of the AHC, he planned to add 1000 listings to the National Register and at the time our state had eight listings. This report also continues themes we discuss today about the success of preservation – commitment to study the history of all Alabamians, need for public-private partnerships, increased funding, and better political support.

As funding increased for the agency, historians and archaeologists were hired in the 1970s to handle programs such as the National Register of Historic Places and cultural resources surveys. The preservation tax incentives program of 1976 was added to the National Preservation Act and required architectural expertise on the staff. Fortunately, there were students emerging from historic preservation academic programs to be hired, so a well-rounded professional staff with specialties in history, archaeology, architectural history, and planning could be assembled.

In 1988, the AHC was located in the Rice-Semple-Haardt House on the corner of Monroe and Union Streets, near the State Capitol. Today the building sits on the corner of Court and High Streets, about fifteen blocks away from where it originally stood.

Preservation has changed directions since 1966 as well. Today we look at the connectivity of our cultural resources and study historic districts, cultural landscapes, scenic byways, and heritage areas. We encourage communities to develop trails to document the various and diverse cultural resources telling the special stories of all their people. Appreciating the modern architectural movement and post-World War II development that changed our city landscapes with new development patterns, design concepts, and building materials is a vibrant trend in preservation today. Historic preservation is an ever-evolving field, and Alabamians should be proud of the leadership from our own citizens who played a big role in helping our country and our state start this interesting journey. ■



Members of the Black Heritage Council gather at their quarterly meeting in 2005. The AHC established the Black Heritage Council in 1984 to promote the preservation and awareness of African-American historic places, artifacts, and culture.

Photo courtesy of Alabama Historical Commission

A Preview of Our Featured Sessions

By NACP Staff

OPENING PLENARY

NACP is excited to host its opening plenary at Christ Church, which serves as the Cathedral for the Diocese of the Gulf Coast. The parish is the oldest in the state of Alabama. The Cathedral campus occupies an entire city block and consists of a Greek Revival sanctuary, 1880s Renaissance Revival chapter house, 1890s parsonage, and two Italianate townhouses. It comprises one of the most intact 19th century ensembles in Mobile.

Our opening plenary speaker, Frank Vagnone, author of the Anarchist Guide to Historic House



Museums, will reflect on the development and accomplishments of the preservation movement over the past fifty years and task us with the daunting challenge of establishing a vision for the next fifty years of local preservation work. Frank is a public historian who has been labeled a “domestic-archeo-anthropologist”, and has over 25 years of transformational leadership in non-profit management, financial oversight, fundraising, strategic planning, board relationships, award-winning cultural program & creative place-making development. Just as interesting as what we preserve, he is fascinated by the efforts to reconsider that which was once preserved by a previous generation, and now, removed by the present generation. What about our perception of value has changed? How did these considerations of value and social capital shift? What are we left with when perceptions shift?

SUSTAINABILITY LUNCHEON

Ed McMahon, a native Alabamian and fellow with the Urban Land Institute will share his thoughts

on the importance of preservation as a tool for sustainability and how our community should envision and advance its mission over the next fifty years. Ed holds the Charles E. Fraser Chair on Environmental Policy at the Urban Land Institute in Washington, DC where he is nationally known as an inspiring and thought provoking speaker and leading authority on economic development and land use policies and trends.



Ed is also the author or co-author of 15 books and over 500 articles, writing regularly for Urban Land Magazine, Planning Commissioners Journal and other periodicals. During the past 30 years he has worked with more than 600 communities in all 50 states on a wide variety of land use and economic development issues.

CLOSING PLENARY

Joe Minicozzi, principal of the consulting firm Urban3 and our closing plenary speaker, will summarize our accomplishments during the conference and issue a call to action for the local preservation community for the next fifty years. Urban3 has been instrumental in prompting a shift in how we understand the economic potency of urbanism and the value of well-designed cities. Joe’s work has been featured in numerous journals and at international conferences. Before we depart



Mobile, he’ll provide us with the tools to reshape our thinking about how to advocate for preservation from an economic and planning perspective. Don’t miss it! ■

Andrew Potts is Executive Director and **Cristina M. Banahan** is Climate Change Fellow for the US National Committee of ICOMOS. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is a non-governmental international organization dedicated to the conservation of the world's monuments and sites.

NAPC and US/ICOMOS Team Up

for a Conversation on Best Practices for Managing Historic Resources in the Face of Global Climate Change

By Andrew Potts and Cristina M. Banahan

Climate is global; it knows no national boundaries. Rising sea levels, desertification and other intensifying impacts of climate change pose unprecedented challenges to the heritage of humankind. Yet our heritage is also a key source of resilience and can be part of the climate change solution. These realities and important global efforts to address them make international climate change collaboration necessary for historic preservation. For this reason, in 2015 US/ICOMOS teamed up with the National Park Service and the J.M. Kaplan Fund to make climate change and cultural heritage a key focus of US/ICOMOS's new international cultural heritage initiative, *KnowledgeExchange*. An exciting new collaboration with NAPC at FORUM 2016, will be the premiere project for *KnowledgeExchange*.

Cultural heritage sites found in our coasts, such as lighthouses, are vulnerable to several climate change impacts including the augmentation in erosion from increases in the frequency and intensity of storms.

Climate change may be a global phenomenon but its impacts are ultimately local and personal. This was powerfully on display at the historic UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) held this past December. Councilwoman Maija Lukin of Kotzebue, Alaska, and Mayor Alson Kelen of the Marshall Islands joined Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell in Paris to share the experiences of US communities on the frontlines of climate change with a global audience. Homes in Kotzebue are slowly sinking into the sea as the permafrost underneath thaws and the sea level rises. Traditional food sources—caribou, seals, berries—are disappearing. In the Marshall Islands, rising sea levels threaten the future of whole communities. “Marshall Islanders will fight to pass our culture to the next generation,” Mayor Kelen poignantly told the audience.

The local nature of these global impacts has made connecting community-level historic preservation leaders with the international cultural heritage and climate change conversation a top priority for US/ICOMOS. That’s why US/ICOMOS is excited to be partnering with the National Alliance of Historic Preservation Commissions on a special set of programs at NAPC FORUM 2016 aimed at heritage, cities and climate impacts. Titled “Climate Impacts: Creating Resilient Cities and Sites,” these sessions will be held throughout the day on July 28th.

Whether you’re a state or municipal preservation officer or volunteer commissioner, a historic site manager, or a consultant involved in preservation planning, knowing how to address the challenges of climate change is becoming a requirement for competency in the cultural heritage field. Knowing how historic properties in your community can be made more resilient is key to public support and economic relevancy.

Climate Impacts: Creating Resilient Cities and Sites, is designed to engage those working on the front lines of historic preservation in a groundbreaking conversation on best practices and model strategies for managing and preparing his-

toric resources for the potential impacts of climate change. It will feature American professionals with international experience in dealing with climate change. In the first panel, the experts will explain how to identify and work with vulnerable populations, which are dependent on a threatened cultural resource. In the second panel, they will discuss case studies showing how cultural heritage sites can successfully cope with climate change impacts. After listening to each panel, participants will be able to discuss application of the recommended strategies to their particular heritage sites and communities.

Scientists around the world agree – growing levels of greenhouse gas emissions are increasing global temperatures. Higher global temperatures in turn, are altering the planet we live in by reducing snowpack, changing rain patterns and making extreme events more prevalent. Changes in the way our environment functions threatens several aspects of our lives including our tangible and intangible heritage. In the United States, cultural heritage sites endangered by climate change range from the Statue of Liberty in New York to indigenous communities in Arizona. Although climate change is an international environmental problem, its impact will vary locally.

Climate change impacts will affect communities that rely on a vulnerable cultural resource in various ways. For example, communities might be vulnerable because an endangered cultural resource provides employment for the community. Common industries include tourism and hospitality. Alternatively, a cultural resource might serve as an anchor for the community and provide social cohesion in times of stress. Losing benefits like economic contributions and social stability will leave vulnerable communities in an even more precarious situation if left unchecked. Preservation officers can help these communities by identifying challenges early on so that they may plan and become more resilient.

Furthermore, because climate change impacts will vary locally, adaptations must differ according to



Photo courtesy of US/ICOMOS

Leaders from several indigenous groups in North and South America came together at COP21 to describe how climate change is already affecting their communities.

the challenges a particular site faces. For example, heritage sites with lush vegetation might face challenges posed by water shortages, droughts and fires. Alternatively, heritage sites located on the coastline might face challenges from sea level rise and erosion. Finally, heritage sites that include historic buildings constructed for previous weather patterns might be vulnerable to new pests and increases in the frequency and intensity of storms. Preservation officers can benefit from listening to different stories about how climate change has affected specific communities and successful responses to those impacts.

US/ICOMOS and NAPC intend this program to be a practical tool for preservation officers looking to understand what climate change might mean for the resource they manage. For that reason, sessions will be “participant-centered,” with a facilitated dialogue leading participants to identify common priorities, concerns, and solutions related to cultural resource management in the face of

climate change. The sessions will use expert guidance to illicit audience contributions in developing an action plan for implementation after the NAPC FORUM, resulting in new tools for creating more resilient historic communities and properties, and a network for ongoing development of best practices in building resiliency.

Climate Impacts: Creating Resilient Cities and Sites, is part of a broader attempt of the cultural heritage community to engage in the climate change conversation. US/ICOMOS and NAPC participated in the Pocantico Call to Action on Climate Impacts and Cultural Heritage convened at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund’s Pocantico Center in 2015. After the sessions, in March, US/ICOMOS’s Board of Trustees voted to create the Climate Change Knowledge Community as part of its KnowledgeExchange initiative.

US/ICOMOS KnowledgeExchange initiative is a new, thematic approach to US-international cultural resource exchange. The goal is to equip a wider



Photo courtesy of US/ICOMOS

The United States had a resounding presence at the COP21 climate change negotiations in Paris last December, hosting several events and speakers at its pavilion.

circle of US preservationists and cultural resource managers with more international tools that will help them solve the challenges their communities face, while harnessing new technologies to break down the cost and time barriers to international collaboration. The objective of the Cultural Heritage and Climate Change Knowledge Community is to create a space where preservation professionals in the United States can exchange and learn best practices from professionals outside the United States. Anyone can join the conversation by subscribing at www.usicomos.org.

In addition to providing opportunities for knowledge exchange among cultural resource professionals, one key goal of the Heritage and Climate Change Knowledge Community is to help US preservation professionals develop best practices for incorporating climate change into their profession while also contributing to the international conversation.

Collaborations like the Climate Impacts: Creating Resilient Cities and Sites program will also help highlight these tools for a US audience and allow cultural resource managers to develop best practices, benchmark their responses, and provide a framework for American preservationists joining the international conversation.

We believe that vigorous discussions and information sharing between cultural heritage professionals benefits all participants as they learn from each other's experiences in dealing with climate change. We hope you will consider joining us in Mobile to learn more about what you can do as a preservation officer and ensure that your cultural heritage resources and community are prepared to handle the challenges climate change might pose. ■

William E. Schmickle, Ph.D is a former chair of the Annapolis Historic Preservation Commission and cofounder of the Oak Ridge, NC, Historic District. He and his wife, Charlotte, own and operate Flag House Inn in the Annapolis National Landmark Historic District. A former professor of political science, he now writes and consults on preservation issues. His books include The Politics of Historic Districts and Preservation Politics.

Preservation Advocacy vs. Making Historic Districts Work

By Bill Schmickle

When I was a private citizen I thought like a preservationist and I spoke like a preservationist. But when I fought to get a historic district started, I taught myself to think like (my term): a “districtist.” Why’s that? I found most folks liked preservation. They did not like government regulation. Advocating for preservation, then, would have been wheel-spinning — or worse: it would sound like I was ignoring their feelings and other interests. And I had to win a healthy number of them over to get our district ordinance passed.

So I laid preservation to one side, and focused on their interests: protecting their investments, enjoying their homes, improving business opportunities, promoting a secure and livable neighborhood, getting leverage in local government to work for better futures. I had to show them that whatever their own interests were, they could be protected or advanced even better through the medium of a historic district. I became an advocate not just for preservation, but for preservation and their interests twinned and twinned in what I now call “rooted growth.” I had to show them, as my friend Frank Whitaker put it, that “the juice is worth the squeeze.” That’s how we’ve all won districts, isn’t it? We can never win over our hard opponents. But we few, we happy district activists, can split them off from the majority in the middle and get those other folks to stand with us.

Fast forward: we have our district now, our ordinance and historic preservation commission (HPC). What do we do? Do we use the HPC for preservation, gate-keeping change? Or do we act to make the district work by facilitating rooted growth, as we promised? Actually, we have two legacies to protect, don’t we? One involves the historic resources we’ve inherited. The other is the community consensus, the essential compact we achieved in our victory for district regulations and procedures.

Unless we secure the latter, we’ll be saying adios to the former in the future.

There comes a time when our district enters what I call its “second generation”: when a majority of properties are owned by folks who weren’t present during our campaign. Few, if any, have bought into the district for the sake of preservation. And most, maybe all, these days don’t cotton to government regulation. Have we taken care to win them over to the community compact that created the district? Do we even engage in preservation advocacy—which was never enough in the first place? Or do we just bide our time, resting on our laurels, until we feel it’s time to tell them: “There’s a law!”

You might think that standing on the law and defensible administrative procedures is fine, if you are focused on preservation. But if you think like a districtist, you’ll understand that the best way of protecting historic resources is by delivering good government. That doesn’t just mean following best practices. The vision that sustains a historic district is one that keeps the public’s trust by putting smiles on people’s faces ■.

William E. Schmickle, Ph.D. will be presenting the session, *Political Demolition by Neglect: The Crisis of Second-Generation Historic Districts*, at FORUM 2016 in Mobile.

Preservation Spotlight: The Rust Belt Coalition of Young Preservationists

The struggles facing preservation groups are common throughout the country, but they are most pronounced in America's industrial legacy cities. From stepping up to a developer, to pushing for formation of a historic district, to advocating for a historic church, the same patterns, problems, and opportunities have been seen throughout the Rust Belt. As city core reinvestment continues, preservationists have their hands full trying to preserve historic neighborhoods and urban fabric. But what hasn't been common through this region is communication. Though leaders of preservation associations may meet at events, subscribe to the same newsletters, and borrow ideas from each other, they haven't had the kind of open communication of ideas, discussions, successes, and failures that would benefit all groups within the region.

That's what the Rust Belt Coalition of Young Preservationists is trying to change.

Intended to be a resource for all legacy cities in the region, the Coalition's mission is threefold. First, we wanted to create a common forum for all the preservation groups in these cities, to post questions and share success stories. In our conversations we saw common problems we were facing; and it turned out we tackled them all slightly differently. By sharing our campaigns and discussing the results (both positive and negative), preservationists in each city will be able to tailor their advocacy to fit their specific sites.

Second, we wanted to act as a mentoring organization for preservation groups forming in smaller metros throughout the Rust Belt. Rather than starting from scratch, they'll have a store of resources available to hit the ground running with their advocacy campaigns. And they'll immediately be part of a network with other preservation groups.



Buffalo's Young Preservationists Walking Tour



Pittsburgh's Young Preservationists Heart Bomb

Third, there's strength in numbers. When we need to raise awareness about a building that's about to be razed, there's much more clout when people throughout the region are shouting about it rather than just in just one city or neighborhood. United, we will be able to show government and developers that we have the same power as better-connected or better-funded organizations. Again, newly-formed preservation groups will be able to tap into that legitimacy to immediately start seeing the results they're working towards.

Plus, it's just helpful to meet each other in person, form solid relationships, and see the cities firsthand to better understand the difficulties and assets of each place. Therefore, we're planning to hold three or four "preservation summits" per year where a host city will organize tours, show off preservation successes, drink beer, and discuss preservation topics. The inaugural summit was held in Pittsburgh, PA, April 8-10 and was hosted by Pittsburgh's Young Preservationists Association. Can you say rivers and bridges, ethnic churches,

smokestacks, and inclines? And pierogies. Lots of pierogies.

You might ask why we're going with the name "young preservationists." We want to connect and engage preservation-minded audiences in a more direct and hands-on way than traditional historic preservation groups, and include people of all ages. We want to be advocates and involved in our communities. Many organizations have low board turnover, making it difficult for newcomers to develop their voices. The formation of these young preservationist groups fosters creativity, invites new audiences, and encourages new voices to grow.

So who is this mysterious "we" that the article has been coyly referring to? Well, this concept has been swirling around the brains of Rust Belt Preservationists for months now, and it finally coalesced when preservationists from Buffalo, Columbus, Pittsburgh, Wheeling, and Indianapolis decided to make it a reality. Here are the preservation groups involved in bringing this coalition together:



Wheeling Young Preservationists



Pittsburgh's Young Preservationists

The **Young Preservationists Association** of Pittsburgh will be hosting the first meetup. Founded in 2003, the YPA has advocated for hundreds of sites throughout Southwest Pennsylvania, some of which will be featured at the April summit. YPA promotes historic preservation as a tool for community and economic development, smart urban growth, and regional revitalization and excels at bringing together smaller, like-minded groups to push back against more powerful developers (sound familiar?). Visit YPA at youngpreservationists.org.

Preserve Greater Indy, founded in the spring of 2015, is a group of young preservationists in Central Indiana looking for new ways to connect and engage in preservation. "Greater Indy" supports preservation not only in its home base of Indianapolis, but also in outlying communities from Muncie to Bloomington. So far, PGI has hosted happy hours, cleaned up the vacant Rivoli Theatre, volunteered for ScoutMuncie (a crowd-sourced architectural survey), and executed social media campaigns including #beersavesplaces and #iamapreservationist.

In December, 2014 the first board of the **Young Ohio Preservationists** was announced as a sub-group of Heritage Ohio. The board was recruited to ensure perspectives from various aspects of preservation. It included architects, planners, preservationists, developers, and students. Preservation can be engaging and empowering for communities; and the Young Ohio Preservationists were created to ensure people under 40 are a part of that dynamic. YOP has provided tours of some of Ohio's restored and neglected treasures, restored over 20 windows in one weekend for affordable housing, facilitated networking between professional and recreational preservationists, and much more. In 2016, the Young Ohio Preservationists will launch a competitive scholarship to attend and present at Heritage Ohio's annual conference in October. Visit YOP at youngohiopreservationists.org.

A group of young, energetic, preservation-minded individuals came together in October of 2012, to form the **Wheeling Young Preservationists**. Members share a deep love of Wheeling, West Virginia and the common goal of preserving the history, culture, and buildings of the city. WYP events include monthly happy hours, partnerships, volunteer workdays, story-mapping of local cemeteries, neighborhood clean-ups and landscaping, and a major fundraising campaign to save The Blue Church. Built in 1837, The Blue Church pre-dates statehood! In 2015, WYP launched a series of hands-on preservation trade workshops to equip local, DIY-minded young preservationists with the knowledge to take on their own restoration projects. Visit WYP at wheelingyoungpreservationists.com

Buffalo's Young Preservationists was founded in 2011 and has helped to save many iconic buildings in downtown Buffalo. BYP is a small army of dedicated folks who love their historic built environment and is known for thinking outside the box and trying



Pittsburgh's Young Preservationists



Young Ohio Preservationists' Window Workshop

new preservation campaigns, creating events like the "heart bomb" which has spread across the country.

If you're interested in learning more about the Rust Belt Coalition of Young Preservationists, or if you're a leader in a preservation group and are interested in joining us, visit rustbeltcoalitionofyoungpreservationists.com, or email rbc@youngpreservationists.org. ■

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ALABAMA

The State of Alabama may see changes to its Historic Preservation Tax Credit if current legislation is passed. The state began offering a tax credit of up to 25 percent for the rehabilitation of historic commercial and residential properties in 2013. The law allows for up to \$20 million in credits per year, meaning roughly \$60 million worth of credits have been awarded for projects statewide in three years.

Under the current law, the credits expired in 2015, but there are two legislative proposals — HB62 and SB230 — to extend the credits for an additional seven years. The House bill includes an amendment to suspend the credits in times when the budget is prorated or level funded, which is a cause for concern. This amendment creates uncertainty concerning when the state would issue or honor credits, and it severely devalues the credits. This could, in effect, cause bank loans to default and projects to result in bankruptcy. Some lawmakers claim that the credit program should be left to expire since its intention was simply to jumpstart development. However, a recent economic impact study commissioned by the Alabama Historical Commission indicated the tax credits were a benefit to communities in the state. According to the study, the tax credit program is responsible for 2,133 direct construction jobs and 1,373 operational-phase jobs. The projects using the credits are considered anchor tenants and create a “halo effect.” Over a 20-year period, every dollar spent on the program will reap \$3.90 in return, and by 2019 the state should break even. An extension of the program would continue to provide strong tax revenue to the state, as well as provide strong anchor development for projects in need. <http://lagniappemobile.com/state-mulling-historic-tax-credit-renewal/>

ILLINOIS

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago announced that within 15 years, nearly 100 parishes could be closed, causing renewed concern for the future of Chicago's historic churches. The threat is not idle, as Bronzeville residents may recall the 2013 demolition of the towering 133-year-old Saint James Catholic Church. The Church stated a shortage of priests joining the seminary, declining mass attendance, and the deferral of maintenance

bills for churches that are in need of attention. All of these issues combined has put a squeeze on archdiocese resources and will force many parishes to either close or consolidate. The sale and subsequent demolition of these spaces has become one of the biggest concerns for Chicago's architectural preservation community, which would like to see more done to keep these buildings standing tall over our neighborhoods.

The protection of religious structures presents a unique set of problems. A particularly formidable roadblock is the city's inability to step in to designate threatened religious buildings as a landmark. The city has powers allowing it to move forward with landmark designations for non-religious buildings in spite of owner consent, however, a 1987 revision to the landmark ordinance states that “no building that is owned by a religious organization...shall be designated a historical landmark without the consent of its owner.” The city can step in, although they have some trepidation with any sacred space. Beyond concerns about the rights of property owners, attempts at landmark designation for religious spaces hits on issues of the separation of church and state. And without protections, many of these buildings are left to deteriorate and ultimately face demolition. Since the church is tax exempt, the demolition of church structures essentially constitutes a land banking effort. While most residents appreciate the historic churches in their communities, general public consensus can start to favor demolition if the buildings become vacant and unmaintained. Ultimately, successful preservation efforts will require a tremendous amount of cooperation, community engagement, and economic creativity. <http://chicago.curbed.com/2016/3/10/11191158/chicago-historic-churches-preservation-battle>

MICHIGAN

State bills in the Michigan legislature are seeking to change current laws for historic districts. Many preservationists say it is the most serious threat to historic districts since the state law was created in 1970. Supporters of the proposed legislation counter the current law has been hijacked by bureaucrats and robs property owners of their rights. Among the changes:

- They would overhaul who serves on local historic district commissions. State law currently says those appointed to local historic commissions should

have “demonstrated interest in or knowledge of historic preservation.” The bills require that any historic commission should include a local elected official, a local developer and at least one resident from the proposed historic district.

- The bills would require require two-thirds of property owners in the area to approve historic districts; no such vote is needed now. After that, two-thirds of the local government body must approve it; no such approval is needed now.
- A historic district could be eliminated through the same two-thirds approval process that it takes to create one.
- Local historic districts would no longer have to follow the federal standards of what is historic. Local historic district commissions use federal guidelines now as their main criteria for establishing a historic district. Those guidelines cover a wide range of what to preserve and what kind of changes could be allowed.

<http://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2016/02/29/historic-district-michigan/81080640/>

TENNESSEE

In an 11-to-1 vote on March 1, the Memphis City Council passed a resolution granting the Memphis Zoo the authority to use a portion of Overton Park’s historic greensward for parking. The council’s action came despite Mayor Strickland’s call to serve as a mediator in the dispute between the zoo and the Overton Park Conservancy, which claimed that it, and not the zoo, has control over the historic greensward. Overton Park was designed by George Kessler in 1901 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The Cultural Landscape Foundation listed the park in its Landslide program in 2009 after the Memphis Zoo, which is located on the northwestern edge of the site, began using the greensward for overflow parking. A traffic and parking study initiated by the OPC and aimed at finding a comprehensive, long-term solution to the problem of limited parking near the park is still underway. <https://tclf.org/landslides/zoo-granted-right-park-historic-greensward>

UTAH

Lawmakers in Salt Lake City want to restrict historic

preservation ordinances around the state. The proposal would override municipal ordinances and render the creation of new local historic districts far more difficult. The law is aimed at Salt Lake City, where the current ordinance allows for the creation of small local historic districts. The current ordinance mandates that at least 15 percent of the property owners in a designated area agree to put it to a vote. A simple majority of at least 51 percent of participating voters would determine whether the area became a local historic district. The new legislation would mandate that 33 percent of property owners agree to put such a measure to a vote. At least 67 percent of all property owners — rather than just participating voters — would have to vote yes to create a local historic district. Additionally, under Salt Lake City’s current ordinance, if a historic district fails, proponents can begin immediately to make another run. The proposed bill would provide a four-year waiting period after a defeat of a proposed district. The proposed legislation appears to be an effort to completely stop any local or grass-roots historic preservation. <http://www.sltrib.com/home/3556819-155/proposed-restrictions-on-historic-preservation-aimed>

WISCONSIN

Designed by architect Donald Grieb and built in southern Milwaukee’s 61-acre Mitchell Park between 1959 and 1967, the Mitchell Park Domes are three cone-shaped horticultural conservatories, each seven stories high and supporting a different climate. The domes are a horticultural learning center and an iconic symbol of the city, attracting nearly 250,000 visitors in 2015. After a small concrete fragment was found in the Desert Dome in January 2016 (presumably having fallen from the ceiling), Milwaukee County officials closed all three domes indefinitely and have since publicly raised the possibility of demolishing them. The greatest threat to the domes is if the county continues deferring requisite upkeep and allows them to continue to deteriorate, the domes will reach the point where razing them would be the only viable option. The domes are fragile precisely because they were inventive, sometimes an inescapable fact of midcentury architecture. <https://tclf.org/landslides/milwaukee%E2%80%99s-mitchell-park-domes-are-threatened>

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<http://napcommissions.org>

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